



Afternoon Alert - Monday, February 13, 2017

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HEADLINES

Noon news

NHK led with a report that a senior MEXT official who retired last March was offered a job at Keio University allegedly through the lobbying of a MEXT official. Most commercial broadcasters gave top play to reports on an announcement by North Korea this morning that it successfully test launched a mid-range ballistic missile on Sunday, saying that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning that Japan, together with the U.S. and South Korea, has called for an emergency UNSC meeting.

INTERNATIONAL

Senior USG, GOJ officials agree to urge North Korea to refrain from provocative actions

NHK reported at 3 p.m. that following the missile launch by North Korea on Sunday, MOFA Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau chief Kanasugi and DOS Special Representative for North Korea Policy Yun held a teleconference on Sunday evening and agreed to strongly urge North Korea to refrain from taking further provocative actions and abide by the UNSC resolutions. The network said the two officials also confirmed that Japan and the U.S., as well as Japan, the U.S., and South Korea, will continue to work closely on North Korea, including at the UN, in light of the joint statement issued by President Trump and Prime Minister Abe calling on North Korea to abandon its nuclear and missile development.

Suga says U.S.-Japan summit “extremely significant”

NHK reported at noon that Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga told reporters this morning that the joint statement issued by President Trump and Prime Minister Abe was the first bilateral document for the new Trump administration, saying that this is a manifestation of the importance Washington attaches to Japan. He was quoted as saying: "This document confirms the strong commitment by the two leaders to further strengthening the alliance and the economic relationship. The summit was extremely significant in further developing the bilateral relationship." On the two leaders playing golf together, Suga reportedly said: "They were able to deepen their exchange and forge a relationship of trust. It was an extremely significant achievement for Prime Minister Abe to hold a joint press conference with President Trump after North Korea's missile launch and to demonstrate both at home and abroad the bond between Japan and the U.S. amid a tough security situation." On the possibility of President Trump visiting Japan, Suga reportedly said nothing has been decided yet but Tokyo will coordinate with the U.S. side to arrange a visit as soon as possible.

Abe "crosses the Rubicon" by siding with Trump

Commercial broadcasters' infotainment shows on Monday reported extensively on Prime Minister Abe's U.S. visit, asking political analysts, journalists, and academics for their views on his diplomatic performance. The pundits were split, with some praising the premier for eliciting from President Trump U.S. security assurances over the Senkaku Islands and "preventing" the U.S. leader from making any unreasonable demands on the economic front. On the other hand, detractors underscored that by choosing not to make any remarks critical of Japan, the President successfully made it difficult for Abe to "say no" to his demands in the future, particularly on the economic front. Former NHK journalist Kimura dismissed such a view, saying that strengthening the alliance with Washington is the only path that Japan should pursue to ensure its peace and prosperity in the increasingly fluid situation in the Asia-Pacific. He said because Abe has already "crossed the Rubicon" by siding with the "controversial" U.S. leader, the prime minister should try to align with the President even more closely so as to obtain practical benefits from the Trump administration.

- [Gist of Japan-U.S. leaders' joint statement](#) (Kyodo News)
- [Gist of Abe-Trump summit meeting, Feb. 10](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Gist of Japan-U.S. foreign ministers' meeting](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gist of PM Abe's remarks at U.S. Chamber of Commerce](#) (Nikkei)
- [Gov't to redraft diplomatic schedule](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe-Trump summit a relief to Japan's automakers](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Business community leaders look forward to deepening of Japan-U.S. ties](#) (Mainichi)

- [Trump raises the stakes in echoes of Reagan](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Members of President's inner circle attended Japan-U.S. summit meeting](#) (Nikkei)
- [Japan-US economic dialogue likely to be a long slog](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Commentary: U.S. desires improvement of Japan-China relations](#) (Nikkei)
- [Abe-Trump summit underscores U.S. engagement with Asia](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Japan used 3 of Trump's key men to arrange Abe trip](#) (The Japan News)
- [New economic talks to blend Trumponomics with Abenomics](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Interview with ex-MSDF chief on Abe-Trump summit](#) (Yomiuri)
- [U.S. initially not keen on economic dialogue established at Abe-Trump summit](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Former diplomat says unofficial golf summit risky](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [After the handshake, Japan's responsibility to the world](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)
- [Editorial: What follows Trump's generous hospitality toward Abe?](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: Trump should stop reckless travel ban moves](#) (The Mainichi)
- [Editorial: A judicial decision serves to check Trump's high-handed executive](#) (The Japan News)
- [Toyota's pilot program eases Bangkok traffic jam, becomes national project](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)
- [Interview: Former SDF lieutenant general urges Japan to use wisdom to avoid conflict with China](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Editorial: Japanese envoy should return to Seoul in nations' mutual interests](#) (The Asahi Shimbun)
- [Toshiba believed to be unable to manage crisis-stricken Westinghouse Electric Company](#) (Shukan Ekonomisuto)

SECURITY

- [Chinese capital buying up Okinawa land leased for U.S. bases](#) (Sappio)
- [Editorial: Adequate storage, disclosure of GSDF activity logs on South Sudan essential](#) (The Japan News)
- [Information obtained that crew member on crashed Osprey may be “dead”](#) (Okinawa Times)
- [Opposition demands defense minister to step down over South Sudan](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

POLITICS

- [Prime minister’s schedule on Feb. 10-11](#) (Nikkei)
- [Prime minister’s schedule on Feb. 9-10](#) (Nikkei)
- [Ruling and opposition party leaders speak out on Japan-U.S. summit](#) (Nikkei)
- [Kaneda also comes under criticism from ruling parties](#) (Mainichi)
- [Record 10,910 refugee applicants face abysmal odds of acceptance in Japan](#) (Japan Times)
- [Editorial: Justice Minister Kaneda must show commitment to antiterror bill](#) (The Japan News)

ECONOMY

- [GOJ’s efforts to stop agricultural piracy in China](#) (Yomiuri)
- [Niigata governor negative about early restart of Kashiwazaki-Kariwa nuclear power plant](#) (Tokyo Shimbun)

SCIENCE

- [Japan’s space agency to try again with minirocket launch in 2017](#) (Nikkei Asian Review)

EDUCATION

- [Editorial: Japan science community should solidify rejection of military R&D](#) (The Mainichi)

SOCIETY

- [Female career-track bureaucrats face both internal and external obstacles in moving up the ladder](#) (THEMIS)

TV PROGRAMS

Experts discuss U.S.-Japan summit on TV debate show

NHK's "Nichiyo Toron" Sunday debate show aired a live discussion by six experts on the first summit meeting between President Trump and Prime Minister Abe. All of the panelists agreed that the summit was a great success for Japan because the President confirmed the United States' commitment to its security alliance with Japan. The panelists also shared the view that the new economic dialogue to be led by Vice President Pence and Deputy Prime Minister Aso will hold the key to future economic discussions between Washington and Tokyo. Former Vice Foreign Minister Mitoji Yabunaka and Keio University Professor Toshihiro Nakayama commented that it is necessary for Japan to closely watch how the Trump administration will implement the policies outlined in the joint statement. University of Tokyo lecturer Ruri Miura pointed out that the Trump administration's policies toward the Asia-Pacific region, including China, are still unclear. Hosei University Professor Kazuo Mizuno expressed concern that the Trump administration may make demands on Japan in the auto or other sectors in future trade talks with Tokyo. Sojitz Research Institute Chief Economist Tatsuhiko Yoshizaki and Meiji University Associate Professor Yasuyuki Iida commented that the spirit of the TPP may be upheld in future U.S.-Japan trade talks. Yabunaka and Iida expressed concern over the possibility of President Trump's "America First" policy having an impact on his foreign policy.

Child poverty

Sunday's "NHK Special" reported on child poverty, saying that while one in six children in Japan is said to be in a state of "relative poverty," the government has failed to take effective measures to resolve the issue. A recent nationwide survey found that children who are suffering from poverty tend to be "invisible" because many of them are able to obtain things such as inexpensive clothes and smartphones. However, the survey found that many of them are unable to live like children because they have to do housework or stay home alone. The program also reported that many high school students work part-time jobs to support their families and often give up on going to college. If this issue is not resolved, the overall social impact will reportedly exceed 40 trillion yen in the future.

